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SERMON,

Preached *March* 12. 1689.

BEING THE 11
SOLEMN FAST

APPOINTED BY

Their Majesties, &c.

By *Geo. Lesley*, Minister of *Olney*, &c.

L O N D O N,

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A
SERMON



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A
S E R M O N

Upon 2 Chron. XIV. 11.

*And Aſa cryed unto the Lord his God,
and ſaid, Lord, it is nothing with thee
to help, whether with many, or with
them that have no power: Help us,
O Lord our God, for we reſt on thee,
and in thy Name we go againſt this
multitude: O Lord, thou art our God,
let not man prevail againſt thee.*

THERE needs no other Preface to
the following Diſcourſe, but this:
That our manifold and crying
Sins, have long threatned, and
now brought upon us the Judgment of
War, one of the ſad Effects of Divine Wrath,

as the Souls under the Altar, of those of our Brethren lately Murder'd in *France* and *Ireland*, and the many now destitute and hunger starved Persons, that have been forced to flee from their Habitations, Estates, Wives, Children, and Acquaintance, and all that was dear to them, do sufficiently witness: Besides, the daily Menaces, Boastings, Raillery and Warlike Preparations of *Senatherib*, and the *Ethiopian Zera*, and all these heightened by the Foul Mouths and Blasphemous Tongues of *Roman Rabsbakehs*, to fright and terrifie the Worshippers of the true God, (the Protestants of these Kingdoms) out of their God, their Religion, Lives and Liberties. These are the Causes of this our Solemn Meeting; These the Causes that this crying Text sounds this day in your attentive Ears. Despise it not,

Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur.

the Case is truly yours. Good King *Asa*, the great Grand-Child of *Solomon*, is hardly warm upon his Throne; his begun Reformation both of Church and State, is scarce come to a *fetus*, when *Zerah* the *Ethiopian* comes

comes out against him, with an Army of a thousand thousand Men, and three hundred Chariots. And tho' *Asa* was well provided, having five hundred and fourscore thousand, all Mighty Men of Valour, as *Verse 8.* yet will he not trust in the Arm of Flesh, but before he Engage his Enemy to force him to a Peace, he'll first make his own with his God; he will not put the Battel to a doubtful hazard; till he has made sure of an Omnipotent Reserve, that can and will undoubtedly Conquer. In this he follows the Divine Policy of his Great Grandfather, who being to Encounter the Monster *Goliath*, of whom you Read, *1 Sam. 17. 45.* looks on the Name of the Lord, to be a better Weapon, Offensive and Defensive, than Shield or Spear. And having a good Cause, he questions not a good and happy Issue of this great Affair, which he goeth about after this manner.

And Asa cryed unto the Lord his God, and said, &c.

In which words, you see the Good King's Behaviour, when Himself and his People are in a common danger, ready to be Invaded (if not Overcome and Destroyed) by an Impious

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Inipious and Merciless Tyrant. He goeth not with *Saul* to a Witch, to understand the Event of the ensuing Battel: Nor doth he bid the People go to their Prayers, as if it were they, and not he, that were concerned; but begins himself, sets the Pattern, and commands them to follow his Example.

And Afa cryed unto the Lord, &c.

And being about the Duty, he strengthens and stirs himself up, to the careful performance of it, by several Arguments. As *First*,

Because the Person he prayeth, he cryeth to, was Omnipotent, All-Sufficient; and so not only able to help, but overcome, either *with many, or with them that have no Power.*

Secondly, Because He and his People were in Covenant with God. *Help us, O Lord, our God.*

Thirdly, Because they depended on him, and denied themselves. *We rest on thee.*

Fourthly, Because he look'd on the War, as God's own Quarrel. *Let not man prevail against thee.*

All which we may take to be, as if he had said, Lord, thou knowest, that my designs
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and desires are to promote thy Interest and Glory, to destroy the False, and to set up and Establish the True Religion, according to thy Appointment. This is the Cause (and it is thine) that I am thus Envied, thus Invaded: and being in this strait, men are but men; not to be rested on, not to be trusted in; but if thou wilt help us, espouse our Cause, and make the Battel thine own, there will be no overcoming of thee; thou canst Conquer with few as well as many, with weak or no men; as well as with strong and many; wherefore we pray thee, stand up for thy own Glory and thy Peoples Safety, who wholly rely on thee: We go forth in thy Name, in thy Strength, against this great Multitude; let not man that is weak and wicked, harden himself and prevail against thee, by overcoming us, who are thy Worshipers and Servants.

The words thus cleared, I shall ground my following Discourse on these two Propositions.

I. That they that are in Trouble, and would have God stand up for their Deliverance, must cry or pray unto him.

II. God's

II. Gods Covenant with His People, obligeth him to hear, and to deliver them.

First then, I say, That they that are in Trouble; &c.

Not because they are, or can be *Narratores*, Informers of God, about the things they want, seeing he is Omniscient; but because he will have them *Oratores*, humble Supplicants for what they desire *gratis*: Hence it is, that we have those Commands in Scripture, *Psal. 50. 15. Call upon me, &c. Psal. 91. 15. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him, &c. Seek ye my face, Psal. 27. 8. Pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. 5. 17.* And this is as well the worshipping of God, as the putting up our desires, making known our Requests unto him; for while we pray to God, we give him, as the Royal Prophet saith, *Psal. 29. 2. The Glory due unto his Name*, we acknowledge all in God Glorious; whereby he makes himself known unto us: As his Omniscience, when we pray on Earth, and expect to be heard in Heaven; his Omnipotence, when we rest on him, as *Asa* did, as one able to do all things for us, when, where, and how he pleaseth:

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We acknowledge his Mercy, when we trust that (notwithstanding our unworthiness) he will grant us those things we pray for.

And as we are to pray for Relief, because we are so commanded; we must also do it, because it is the means appointed by God for this end, for obtaining what we want at his hands. If you ask Christ, who shall have, find, and have God's Ear, and the Gate of Heaven opened, and he'll tell you, 'tis they that *ask, seek, and knock*, Luke 11. 9. If we want any thing that is good for us, we must go to our Prayers, for this is the through Key of Heaven; it opens God's Heart, his Hand, the Store-House and Wardrobe of his Providence, for our good: And because our Necessities are many, our Prayers must be frequent; *Give us this day, every day, all our daies, our daily bread*: Yet when some extraordinary thing falls out, as Sword, Famine, Pestilence, or other Universal Calamity, then must we in a more solemn and serious, humble and penitent manner, appear before the Lord, and cry unto him in our Affliction; and this is called Fasting, Humiliation, and Prayer; which is not only required

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by, but is acceptable unto God : *Therefore now also, saith the Lord, turn ye even unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and rent your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.* That is, if ye Mourn, Weep, and Fast, for your by-past Sins, and pray for Deliverance both from Sin and Punishment ; in that dejected, humbled, and distressed Condition, he will stop the Execution of the denounced Judgment, and send relief.

And this I find to have been the practice of those that had the best experience of God's Dealings, and knew best how to appease his wrath, and procure their own safety ; when the Children of *Israel* were twice discomfited by the *Benjamites*, as you read *Judges 20.* from v. 18. to 26. they rally not the third time, till they had gathered all the People together to the House of God, and there wept and fasted, and offered Burnt Offerings and Peace Offerings to the Lord, They confessed, and humbled themselves for their Sins ; which was

no sooner done, then they overcame their Enemies. When the *Philistins* went up against *Israel*, who were afraid of them, *1 Sam. 7. 8.* they bid *Samuel* cry unto the Lord God; which he did, *v. 9.* and the Lord heard him, and fought with Thunder against them. When the Children of *Moab* and *Ammon* came against *Jehoshaphat*, *2 Chron. 20.* 'tis said, *v. 3.* And *Jehoshaphat* feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a Fast throughout all *Judah*: And what the event of that was, see verses *15, 16.* *Jahaziel*, inspired of God, said, *Hearken ye all Judah, and ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou King Jehoshaphat: Be not afraid, nor dismayed, by reason of this great multitude; for the Battel is not yours, but Gods: To morrow go ye down against them, &c. Ye shall not need to fight in this Battel, set your selves, stand ye still, and see the Salvation of the Lord with you.* When the Children of *Israel* returned from *Babylon*; what a Solemn Fast they had, you may read, *Nehem. 9.* The work of which was, Confession of their Sins, and God's Goodness; and desiring that the Great, the Mighty, and the Terrible God, who keepeth Covenant and Mercy, would not

let all the Trouble seem little before 'him that had come on their Kings, Princes, Priests, and Prophets; on their Fathers, and on all the People. When *Haman* had gotten the Decree Signed, for destroying the *Jews*, *Esther* 3. 19. *Mordecai* and *Esther* run not directly to the King, but make their first Address unto God. First, *Mordecai* and all the *Jews* that were in *Shusan*, *Esth.* 4. 3. mourned greatly, fasted, weeped, and wailed; and many (among whom was *Mordecai*) lay in Sackcloth and Ashes; and *Esther* doth the like, commands *Mordecai* to Fast and Pray for her Success, while she and her Maids fasted also. How prevalent this was with God and the King, the Story informs us. The *Jews* are Reprieved, *Haman* Hanged, *Mordecai* Exalted, and all their Enemies Slain.

If all these Examples be not enough, take notice of a Heathen King of *Nineveh*, *Jonah* 3. when *Jonah* had cryed or Preached a Sermon of God's bidding, the People believed God, and Proclaimed a Fast; the King rose from his Throne, and caused it to be Proclaimed thro' *Nineveh*, That neither Man nor Beast should eat

eat or drink any thing, but (in an humble posture) cry mightily unto the Lord, and turn every one from their evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands. And what comes of this, you may read in the last verse of the Chapter; *And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he said he would do unto them, and he did it not.* Now by what is said, you see the advantageousness of this day and duty; and therefore I hope that you will follow these Examples, by letting the manner of your Praying and Fasting shew (to God and the World) that you are in good earnest. It's not a Lip-labour, a superficial perfunctory Devotion, that will fit this Solemnity; the Fasting and Prayer is not acceptable to God, that consists in the external afflicting of the Soul, looking sour, hanging down the head like a Bulrush, and to spread Sackcloth and Ashes. But our Fasting and Praying, must be fervent and feeling; for, imitating *Ezra*, we must Mourn for our own Sins, and the Sins of all those that are in the same circumstances with us; we must fully and freely confess them, and resolve for the future to forsake them. For
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certainly God doth not chide willingly, nor afflict the Children of men, Lam. 3. 33. He never leaves a People, till they leave him; it's our Sins of Atheism, Prophaneness, our neglect and contempt of his Ordinances, our inconstancy in our Religion and to our Principles, with all the rest of the Black Guard of Murders, Adulteries, Blasphemies, Thefts, Perjuries, and Covetousness, that have highly provoked Heaven, and moved God to stir up potent, tyrannous and Blood-Thirsty Enemies, not only amongst our selves, but from abroad, to strike at the Root, that since we have not been, we are not yet, zealous for God, for our Holy Reform'd Religion, they may be his Scourge to whip us into our Duty, our Obedience. Hear we not every day of some Stratagem or other of theirs, and how great Preparations they are a making for our and our Religion's destruction? yet all will signifie no more, than a *Hunslow-Heath* or *Salisbury* Campaign, if we this day, as we pretend to spread our hands, would spread our hearts before God, pour out our Souls, not only in a free acknowledgment of our Sins, but also of God's Mercy, that we are not consumed.

med. If we would resolve this day, (with broken Hearts and watry Eyes) that every one should endeavour to mend one, by a hearty Resolution to forsake our Sins, and putting our selves out to the performance of all Holy, Religious, and Christian Duties; we should soon see, that God would repent him of the evil, and put Hooks in our Enemies Noses, and Bridles in their Jaws, and send them back by the way they came.

Now that this may not be thought to be an idle surmise, (*inter tot bellicos apparatus*) when so much Preparation is making against us; so many Men of Brass and Steel, envenom'd and exasperated with Bloody and Cruel Revenge: Let us consider the force, power, and prevalency of fervent effectual Prayer, Fasting, and Humiliation. Was it ever heard, that an Army of Men could dry up a Sea with their feet, and go through dry-shod? This *Moses* his Prayer did, who tho' he spoke not one word, yet such was the Zeal and Fervour of his humble Soul, that *Exod. 14. 15.* the Lord said unto him, *wherefore cryest thou unto me? Speak unto the Children of Israel that they go forward. But lift*

lift thou up thy Rod, and stretch out thine hand over the Sea, and divide it, and the Children of Israel shall go on dry ground thro' the midst of the Sea. Jacob's Faithful Prayer and Weeping, as *Hosea* saith; 14. 4. prevailed over the Angel. *Josuah's* Prayer stopt the courses of Sun and Moon; till the People had avenged themselves upon their Enemies. *Elijah's* Prayer opened and shut Heaven so, as there was neither Drought nor Rain but at his word, 1 *Kings* 18. 41. And when King *Abaziah* sent to apprehend him, 2 *Kings* 1. 10. he did but only say, *If I be a man of God, let fire come down from Heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty,* and it was done twice. *Daniel*, by his daily Prayers, takes away not only the fury, but the very Nature of the Fire, *Dan.* 3. 25. stopt the Mouths of the Lyons, 6. 22. By the Prayers of *Deborah*, *Judges* 5. 21. *Jabin* and *Sisera* were destroyed. *The Stars in their courses fought against Sisera, the River of Kishon swept them away.* When *Benhadad* King of *Assyria* had sent Horses and Chariots, and a great Hoast, to take *Elijah* when he was in *Dothan*, 2 *King.* 6. 13. his Prayers not only procured him a Celestial Guard, the Mountain full of Horses and Chariots

Chariots of fire round about: but also smote them all with Blindness, so that he led them to *Samaria*, v. 20. The Churches Prayers, *Act. 12. 5, 6, 7.* broke open the Prison Doors, made *Peter's* Chains fall off, opened the Iron Gate, to make free passage for his escape. Fasting and Prayer hath cast out Devils, healed all manner of Diseases; and 'tis, as the Scripture saith, able to remove Mountains and Sycomore Trees; and if so, what should hinder? nothing but our sins, that these uncircumcised *Philistins* should feel the force of ours. *Oratio Sancti penetrat cælum, quomodo non & hostem vincat in terris?* The Prayers of Holy Men pierce Heaven, how shall they not then overcome an Army upon Earth? *Plus valet unus Sanctus orando, quam numeri peccatores præliando.* One Holy Man's Prayers can do more than many Wicked Mens Swords; for, *Deus qui nullis viribus superari potest, publicani precibus vincitur;* God, who can be overcome with no outward force, yields to the *Publican's* Prayers. *Luther* was wont to call Prayer his great Ordinance, and a Praying People, the Chariots and Horsemen of *Israel*. Thus, I hope, you

see that they that are in distress should cry unto God, this being the only means to obtain Deliverance.

Let us then bring what hath been said home to our selves, thus.

Are we in distress? which I am sure every one of us must confess, unless we be profest *Papists*, or mistaken Loyalists, to give it the best term; then surely, if Salvation, Deliverance, be so near our doors; if there wants nothing but ask, and have; we ought this day to examine our own Hearts, and see whether they be real or not, whether they be ready to lay hold on this opportunity: If they be churlish, and sunk like *Nabal's*, if we will not give God a good word, a Prayer, a Tear, a Sigh, or a Groan for Peace, Plenty, Religion, and the security of all those things we reckon dear to us; what can we expect besides his just displeasure, and in that, that he should make us a Prey to our implacable Enemies. If we trust in Ships, Horses, Men, and Provisions, and forget the Lord of Hosts, he can quickly blast all. If we seek with *Asa* to the Physician, and not to the Physician of our Souls, we may dye of

a Bloody Flux; or, if we be yet more remiss and sinful, when the Rod is hanging over our heads, we may expect Scorpions.

Let us therefore, with the Sea-Men in a Storm, let go our Sheet-Anchor; with the Heathen Mariners, cry mightily to the Lord; and thus doing, we may expostulate with Heaven in the Royal Prophets Words, *Psal. 80. 4. O Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the Prayer of thy People? Why dost thou not hear? Why dost thou not help?*

But if any say, we have Prayed often, and are never the better: I answer, or rather St. James, 4. 3. *Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss;* ye have Prayed (it may be) that God would save your Lives, your Estates; that you might live more secure, easie, and sinful: But not, that he would save your Religion and Souls; that were going together. Or (perhaps) you were not fit for that Mercy you begg'd; or because you have been unthankful for what is past, for the purity of the Gospel, the plenty of all good things; with the peaceable enjoyment of them; or it may be, you pray with carelessness and indifference, and therefore he

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will

will not only make you wait his time, but double your diligence; praying more frequently, more earnestly, more faithfully; to which I exhort you this day. If you pray coldly, you cannot hear your selves, and then how can you think that God should? Take your measures from *Jacob*, wrestle with God, as he did, tell him plainly, *ye will not let him go till he blest you*, Gen. 32. 25. Imitate *Moses*, who prest so hard upon God, for the preservation of his People, that, *Exod. 32. 10.* he cries, *Let me alone. Hinder me not by thy Prayers from punishing them.* Remember the Story of the *Cananitisb Woman*, *Mat. 15. 2.* She cryed to Christ, *Have mercy on me, O God, thou Son of David.* Stand to it, as she did, who, tho' the Disciples cryed, *send her away;* and Christ told her that his Business was not with her; yet still she cries, *Lord help me;* and tho' he gave her a second repulse, telling her *that it was not meet to take the Childrens Bread, and give it to Dogs:* As if he had said, thou art a Gentile, I am come to the *Jews*; it is not fit that I should give the favours intended them to thee, thou art a Dog in respect of them, thou art

art not to eat the Childrens Bread. Yet this doth not make her give over; she confesseth all, Lord, 'tis true, I am a Dog (an unworthy Creature) but one of thine; and therefore, tho' I may not eat with the Children, yet the Crumbs that fall from thy Table belong to me; and this her Faith and Constancy, moves Christ's Compassion and Pity, and he is so overcome by her importunity, that he crys out, *O woman, great is thy Faith: Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* Our Nursing Father, like Solomon, Jehosaphat, Asa, Ezra, and Nehemiah, hath begun, he hath Proclaimed this Fast; that he may first cry unto the Lord, and then (in his own Person) fight for you, your Religion, Laws, Lives and Liberties; then surely 'tis the least you can do, to pray to God for him, and in so doing for your selves also. Set about it seriously, and with all your Hearts, and give God rest neither night nor day; be all like the importunate Widow, and this *Cananitish* Woman, assuring your selves, that tho' the Vision tarry, it will at last speak; tho' in a little wrath he hath hid his face from you, he will with everlasting Mercy gather you. Let
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us then, with *David*, lift our Eyes to the Hills, to the great God of Heaven, he is able, he is willing to deliver you. And let this be your comfort and encouragement; you have no Rivals, your *French, Irish, English, and Scottish* Enemies, either will not, or dare not (as they say for Humilities sake) accost God immediately, but by Proxy; and 'tis well for us it is so. Let them pray to the Blessed Virgin, to Angels, to Saints, whether real or nominal. Let them cry aloud (like *Baal's* Priests) and cut themselves, as their manner is, with Whips and Wires. Let them elevate their Host, their breaden God, as long, as oft, as they will; these, all these, can neither help them, nor hurt us. Let us (I say) call upon, cry, pray unto the true God, in the name of Christ, and he will accept our Sacrifices, hear our Prayers, pour contempt, shame, scorn and derision, even upon the Heads of Kings, for our sakes. He will execute Judgment for us, he will bring us forth into Light, and we shall behold his Righteousness. This shall suffice for the first point, viz.

That

That they that are in Trouble, and would have God stand up for their Deliverance, must cry, or pray unto him: For *Aſa* cryed unto the Lord, &c.

The Second is this,

That God's Covenant with his People, obligeth him to hear, to deliver them.

His Covenant (I ſay) not their Works, *theſe cannot*, as the *Psalmiſt* ſaith, *extend unto him*, but his own free Act bindeth up his hands ſo (I ſpeak this with Reverence) that he cannot do otherwiſe, ſince he hath not only ſaid, *Gen. 17. I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect; But ſworn, Heb. 6. 17, 18. Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the Heirs of Promise, the immutability of his Counſel, confirmed it by an Oath: that by two immutable things (viz. his Promise and his Oath) in which it was impoſſible for God to lye, we might have a ſtrong Conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope*
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set before us. If every Honest Man be obliged to keep his Promise, his Oath, who is Mutable and a Liar; much more God, who is Faithful, and cannot deny himself: And what this Covenant is, you may read, *Jer. 30.22. Ye shall be my People, and I will be your God.* Now, when he cloaths himself with this Relation, he assures them with whom he enters into Covenant, that he will preserve them from all Evil, Spiritual, Temporal, and Eternal, and will bestow good things of the same nature and duration upon them. Of this the Scripture is full. This Covenant then is the Christian's *Magna Charta*, and all the particular Promises (like the *English Laws*) depend upon it; every Promise, wherein any Happiness is contained, hath this Sign and Seal; *I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* He that seriously considers this, will find that God's Covenant and Promise obligeth him to do his People good, give them Ease, Relief, Deliverance, and all other Blessings, when Prayed for upon this account. For by this all his Attributes lye at stake, and are engaged for the performance; his
 Truth

Truth, for their Security; his Love, for their Comfort and Spiritual Satisfaction; his Power, for their Protection; his Wisdom for their Direction; and this being so, all in Christ is theirs; his Love, his Grace, his Merits; he is their Saviour and Redeemer. The Holy Ghost is their Comforter, teacheth, guideth, comforteth, and sealeth their Hearts with all the Promises; to which we may add, the Guardianship of his Angels. And this will yet more fully appear, if we take notice of the Names and Titles that God gives his People; as his Peculiar Treasure, his Love, his Delight, the Lot of his Inheritance, his Hidden ones, his Jewels, his Beloved; and because they are so, he followeth them whither soever they go. With this Moses encouraged Joshua to go against the Canaanites, Deut. 31.

6. *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them; for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee, he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* This encouragement God himself gives him, after Moses's Death, Josh. 1.

9. *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: For the Lord thy God is with thee,*

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whither-

whithersoever thou goest. He stands at their right hand, to save them from those that Condemn their Soul, Psal. 109. 31. In the time of trouble he hides them in his Pavilion, Psal. 27. 5. He keeps their feet, and the Wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail, 1 Sam. 2. 9. Their very bones, Psal. 34. 20. He numbers their Hairs, bottles up their Tears; if they sigh or groan, he observes it, Psal. 38. 9. He is their Hope, their Help, their Health, their Rock, their Refuge: All which may be comprehended in one verse of the 84th Psalm, *The Lord is a sun and a shield, and will give grace and glory: and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. A Sun for their comfort Spiritual and Temporal. Mal. 4. 2. But unto you that fear my Name, shall the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his Wings. A Son to give Life, a Shield to defend it; a Son to make them fruitful in good Works, and a Shield to preserve them from all evil. This is God's part of the Covenant, which he will most faithfully perform. And ours is, to be holy as he is, in all manner of Conversation:*

tion: For he that expects an interest in the Covenant, and calleth God his Father, and Jesus Christ his Redeemer, must depart from Iniquity.

And now since God by Covenant hath obliged himself to do us good, what remains? but that we labour to make sure of this, that we are in it; that God is ur God, and we his people; being by him so often exhorted to it, *2 Pet. 1. 10. Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; And 2 Cor. 13. 5. Examine your selves, whether ye be in the Faith; prove your selves, &c.* For 'tis a true sign that we are in Covenant with God, and that all good things belong to us, if we be in the Faith.

Secondly, If God hath been so free, so kind to us; let us be so thankful, as to labour to keep our part of the Covenant, to walk before him, and be perfect; let it be our greatest care to please him, our greatest fear and grief to offend him. Let us in Opinion, Affection, and Practice, love, admire, and

acknowledge him. Let him have the chief
 seat in our Souls. Let us count all things
 but loss and dung in comparison of him.
 Let us suffer neither the Waters of Adversity,
 nor the Rivers of Prosperity to quench our
 Love towards him; and let us resolve, with
David, Psal. 119. 106. to swear and perform
it, that we will keep his Righteous Judgments.
 This will make us put so high an estimate on
 all his favours, and the fountain of them his
 Covenant, that we will say with the humble
 Prophet, *2 Sam. 7. 18, 19. Who am I, O Lord
 God? And what is my House, that thou hast
 brought me hitherto?* And with the same Pro-
 phet, *Psal. 144. 3. Lord, what is man, that thou
 takest knowledge of him? or the Son of Man,
 that thou makest account of him?* Account in-
 deed; for every good Man, from the King
 to the Begger, hath right and priviledge to
 call the most high God, his Father; the bright-
 ness of his Glory, his Redeemer; and the Holy
 Spirit, his Teacher, Comforter, and Preser-
 ver. He may claim the Word and Sacra-
 ments as his Heritage for ever; and go bold-
 ly to the Throne of Grace, and ask what
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he pleaseth in the Name of Christ, which, *Mat. 11. 24.* shall be given him. And being there, his Infirmities shall be winked at, and his Endeavours accepted, which must undoubtedly assure him of Protection in all dangers and distresses, and make him, with a Divine Confidence, cry out with the Royal Prophet, *Psal. 80. 14.* *Return, we beseech thee, O God of Hosts; look down from Heaven, and behold and visit this vine, &c.* He may look to have all his wants supply'd, *Psal. 23. 1, 2, 3.* He may triumph over Death, Hell, the Devil, his own wicked Heart, and wicked Men, in *David's Tune, Psal. 27. 1.* *The Lord is my Light, and my Salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?* And if this be so, 'tis a great part of our work this day, to improve this Covenant. Our Fast will be nauseous to God, and unprofitable to our selves, if our Hearts have not laid hold on it; if we cannot, with a modest boldness, and holy reverence, challenge God with, and put him in mind of it; and therefore our Saviour (in that most perfect Form of Prayer) hath taught us to say, *Our Father:* As if he should have said,

no

no man is fit to pray to God, that is not in Covenant with him, that hath not a Right and Title to call him Father; *Nam ipsum nomen* (as one saith) *orat pro nobis*; the very Name, *Father*, prays for us. Let the Papists begin theirs, with *Ave Maria*, we will begin ours with *Pater Noster*. Let them bring before God, the Merits of their Saints, the Treasure of their Church; and we will produce his Covenant, his own Hand-writing, that he hath Sworn to, Sealed with his Son's Blood, and Sealed by his Spirit; this is the Good Old Way, and we will, by the Grace of God, follow it. It was *Jacob's* course, let it be ours. *O God of my Father Abraham, and God of my Father Isaac, the Lord, which saidst unto me, Return unto thy Country, and to thy Kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the Mercies, and of all the Truth which thou hast shewed unto thy Servant; for with this staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands; deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my Brother, &c.* Here you see he disclaims his own Merits, acknowledges his own unworthiness, and only sup-
ports

ports himself with God's Promise : This was Nehemiah's course, *Nehem. Ch. 1. v. 5, 6. I beseech thee, O Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepest Covenant and Mercy, for them that love him, and observe his Commandments : Let thine ears be now attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the Prayer of thy Servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the Children of Israel thy Servants, and confess the sins of the Children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee : Both I and my Father's House have sinned. Here is nothing pleaded yet but Covenant. This was always David's, Psal. 16. 1, 2. Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust, &c. In the 18. Psal. v. 1, 2. I will love thee, O Lord my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer. This was Christ's Argument, when he makes his last, great, and solemn Prayer for his Church, John 17. I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me, for they are thine; and all mine are thine, and thine are mine; by Creation, Covenant, and Purchase: This was Asa's course in the Text; And Asa cryed unto the Lord his God,*

and!

and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy Name we go against this multitude; O Lord, thou art our God, let not man prevail against thee. Let us follow their example, and in this day of our Trouble, this day of our Humiliation, put God in mind of his Covenant and Promise; and that we may expect his Ear, and hand, the hearing of our Prayers, and his irresistible help, let us be ingenuous with him, not hiding, but confessing our sins; and not only so, but Mourning for them, and forsaking of them; especially those we stand accused of, before God and our Consciences this day; resolving, that as we would have him to pity, pardon, help, and assist us, we will pity our selves, by a turning from, a loathing and leaving of those Crimes that bring Judgments upon us; then may we expect, that he will keep us *as the apple of his eye*; that he that toucheth us, shall be rewarded as if he touched that. *Pharaoh* may attempt to detain *Israel* in Bondage, the Kings of *Canaan* may strive to disturb, kill, and keep them from

from the promised Land, the King of *France*,
and the late of *England*, may, and do strive
to destroy us, to rob God of his Glory, and
give it to Graven Images, to rob Men of their
Lives, Estates, and Liberties, But he that
sits in Heaven shall laugh them to scorn, the Lord
shall have them in derision; then shall he speak
to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore dis-
pleasure. If we trust in God, and rest on him,
as *Asa*, and *Jehoshaphat*, and their People did; if
we keep our part of the Covenant, no Weapon
formed against us shall prosper. 'Tis a good
Cause that always prevails, and ours is so; all
that's dear to God and us; the Power is Infi-
nite that we implore. What remains then, but
that we, being in *Asa* and his Peoples Circum-
stances, take their course, Repent of our Sins,
humble our Souls as well as Bodies before God,
and cry to him for his help. That party that
sinneth least and prayeth most, will be sure to
have the Victory, for God is God, and will be on
their side. And seeing the time of determination
by the Sword, seems to be at hand, let us all,
not only now, but at all times, be as so many
Moses's, *Aarons*, and *Hurs*, holding up our

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hands

hands to Heaven for his favour, in the pardon
of our Sins; the Cause of this, and all our
other Miseries. And for the Life, Health,
Prosperity, and Victory of our *Asa*, and his
Armies; and that that God who hath raised
him up for his Truth's Champion, and Faith's
Defender, may cover his Head in the day of
Battel, cloath his Enemies with Shame, Ter-
rour, and Confusion, but upon himself make
his Crown flourish. *Now to the Lord of Hosts,
the God of the Armies of our Israel, to the King
of Kings, whose power no Creature is able to resist,
Immortal, Invisible, and only Wise, be all Ho-
nour, Glory, Might, and Dominion, both now,
and for ever, Amen.*

F I N I S.

